

OPINION 2380 (Case 3630)**CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927 (Aves) and *Coracia melanorhamphos* Vieillot, 1817 (currently *Corcorax melanorhamphos*): names conserved**

Abstract. Under the plenary power the Commission has conserved the family name CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927 for the Australian bird family known as mudnesters and *melanorhamphos* Vieillot, 1817 as the correct spelling of the valid name for the type species of the type genus of CORCORACIDAE.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Aves; CORCORACIDAE; STRUTHIDEIDAE; *melanoramphos*; *melanorhamphos*; *melanorhamphus*; Australian mudnesters; Australia.

Ruling

- (1) Under the plenary power:
 - (a) the name CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927 has been given precedence over STRUTHIDEIDAE Mathews, 1924, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
 - (b) the spelling *melanorhamphos* has been ruled to be the correct original spelling of the specific name of the type species of the type genus of CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927.
- (2) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology:
 - (a) CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927, type genus *Corcorax* Lesson, 1831, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over the name STRUTHIDEIDAE Mathews, 1924 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms, as ruled in (1)(a) above;
 - (b) STRUTHIDEIDAE Mathews, 1924, type genus *Struthidea* Gould, 1837, with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over the name CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms, as ruled in (1)(a) above.
- (3) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *Corcorax* Lesson, 1831 (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy *Corcorax australis* Lesson, 1831;
 - (b) *Struthidea* Gould, 1837 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Struthidea cinerea* Gould, 1837.
- (4) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *melanorhamphos* Vieillot, 1817, as published in the binomen *Coracia melanoramphos*, correct original spelling of the name of the type species of *Corcorax* Lesson, 1831, as ruled in (1)(b) above;
 - (b) *cinerea* Gould, 1837, as published in the binomen *Struthidea cinerea*, the specific name of the type species of the genus *Struthidea* Gould, 1837.

(5) The following names are hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology:

- (a) *melanoramphos* Vieillot, 1817, as published in the binomen *Coracia melanoramphos*, incorrect original spelling of the name of the type species of *Corcorax* Lesson, 1831;
- (b) *melanoramphus* Cabanis, 1851, as published in the binomen *Cercoronis melanoramphus*, unjustified emendation of the specific name of *Coracia melanoramphos* Vieillot, 1817.

History of Case 3630

An application to conserve the family-group name CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927 for the Australian bird family known as mudnesters and the spelling *melanoramphos* Vieillot, 1817 for the type species of the type genus of CORCORACIDAE was received from Richard Schodde (*Australian National Wildlife Collection, CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences, Canberra, ACT, Australia*), Walter Boles (*Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia*), Les Christidis (*National Marine Science Centre, Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, Australia*), Philippa Horton (*South Australian Museum, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia*), Ron Johnstone (*Western Australian Museum, Welshpool DC, Western Australia, Australia*), Leo Joseph (*Australian National Wildlife Collection, CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences, Canberra, ACT, Australia*), and Wayne Longmore (*Museum Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia*) on 25 May 2013. After correspondence the Case was published in BZN 70: 238–244 (December 2013). The title, abstract and keywords of the Case were published on the Commission's website. Comments on this Case were published in BZN 71(1): 39–40 (March 2014) and 71(3) 182–183 (September 2014). The Case was sent for vote on 1 June 2015. A greater than two-thirds majority of Commissioners voted FOR the Case (14 For, 2 Against, 4 Split).

Decision of the Commission

At the close of the voting period on 1 September 2015 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 14: Alonso-Zarazaga, Ballerio, Brothers, Halliday, Harvey, Kottelat, Lamas, Pape, Rosenberg, Štys, van Tol, Winston, Yanega and Zhou.

Negative votes – 2: Bogutskaya and Kojima.

Split votes – 4: Bouchet (FOR (1)(a), (2); AGAINST 1(b), (3), (4), (5); Grygier (FOR (1), (2), (3), (4)(a), (5)); AGAINST (4)(b)), Krell (FOR (1)(a), (2)(a), (2)(b), (3)(a), (3)(b), (4)(b), (5)(b); AGAINST (1)(b), (4)(a), (5)(a)), Kullander (FOR (1)(a), (2)(a), (2)(b); (3)(a), (3)(b), (4)(b); AGAINST (4)(a), (5)(a), (5)(b)).

Fautin, Ng, Patterson, Pyle and Zhang were on leave of absence.

Voting AGAINST, Kojima said that both proposals (namely, to give the name CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927 precedence over STRUTHIDEIDAE Mathews, 1924, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms; and to treat *melanoramphos* as the correct original spelling) have weak background reasons in terms of nomenclatural stability. CORCORACIDAE (or correctly STRUTHIDEIDAE) included only two monospecific genera and at the subfamily level these two names (CORCORACINAE and STRUTHIDEINAE) were sometimes treated as different taxa, each consisting of a single monospecific genus. Therefore, most scientists could cope with the use of STRUTHIDEIDAE instead of CORCORACIDAE, he added.

SPLITTING his vote, Bouchet said that the name *melanorhamphos* was formed from the two Greek words *melas* (*melanos*) – black, and *rhamphos* – bill, and it was mnemonically easier to remember that *melanorhamphos* was the correct spelling to be used for the white-winged mudnesters. As this name appeared to be in dominant usage, he voted for its conservation. However, he viewed conditional reversal of precedence as a source of instability, so he voted against giving precedence to the name CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927 over STRUTHIDEIDAE Mathews, 1924. Also SPLITTING his vote, Grygier said that this Case included no request for any particular ruling concerning the type-species designation for *Struthidea*, nor concerning the specific name *cinerea* per se, and it is therefore unclear, under the specifications provided in Article 78.4.2, why *cinerea* should be entered on the Official List. Also SPLITTING his vote, Krell said that the currently predominant spelling *melanorhamphos* was not much different from the actual original spelling *melanoramphos*. Since the original spelling was currently used by some authors and a change back to the original spelling would only be a minor change for the majority of authors, he suggested the original spelling should be used, which would lead to a more stable nomenclature in the long run. Also SPLITTING his vote, Kullander said that the adoption of CORCORACIDAE seemed sound, but there was no reason to rule on the species name. The authors stated that the original spelling was adopted particularly by digital sources, whereas the non-original spelling was contained in a printed book unlikely to ever be updated. He was convinced that the usage would be guided by freely available updated online sources and not by an outdated book that would be difficult to obtain after a few years.

Original references

The following are the original references to the entries on either an Official List or an Official Index in the ruling given in the present Opinion:

- CORCORACIDAE Mathews, 1927, *The birds of Australia*, vol. 12, pt. 10. H.F. & G. Witherby, London, p. 413.
- australis*, *Corcorax*, Lesson, 1831, *Traité d'ornithologie, ou tableau méthodique des orders, sous-orders, familles, tribus, genres, sous-genres et races d'oiseaux*, vol. 1. F.G. Levrault, Paris, pp. 324–325.
- Corcorax* Lesson, 1831, *Traité d'ornithologie, ou tableau méthodique des orders, sous-orders, familles, tribus, genres, sous-genres et races d'oiseaux*, vol. 1. F.G. Levrault, Paris, pp. 324–325.
- melanoramphos*, *Coracia*, Vieillot, 1817, *Coracias*, in: *Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle, Nouvelle Édition*, vol. 8. Déterville, Paris, p. 2.
- melanorhamphos*, *Coracia*, Vieillot, 1817, *Coracias* in: *Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle, Nouvelle Édition*, vol. 8. Déterville, Paris, p. 2.
- melanorhamphus*, *Cercoronis*, Cabanis, 1851, *Museum Heineanum. Verzeichniss der ornithologischen Sammlung des Oberamtmann Ferdinand Heine, auf Gut St, Burchard vor Halberstadt, 1 Theil, die Singvögel*. R. Frantz, Halberstadt, p. 228.
- melanorhamphus*, *Coracia*, Vieillot, 1817, *Coracias*. in: *Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle, Nouvelle Édition*, vol. 8. Déterville, Paris, p. 2.
- cinerea*, *Struthidea*, Gould, 1837, *A synopsis of the birds of Australia and adjacent islands*. J. Gould, London, unnumbered plate, January, part 1.
- Struthidea* Gould, 1837, *A synopsis of the birds of Australia and adjacent islands*. J. Gould, London, unnumbered plate, January, part 1.
- STRUTHIDEIDAE Mathews, 1924, *The birds of Australia. Supplement No. 3. Check list of the birds of Australia, pt 3. Order Passeriformes (concluding part)*. H.F. & G. Witherby, London, p. 218.